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IN his admirable article on "The English Bible and the College Curriculum,"* an article, by the way, which should be read by every college-professor and by every member of a board of trustees, the Rev. Samuel H. Lee makes this remark:

"To a young man who has enjoyed ten years of intellectual training and growth, notions of his childhood seem of little worth. If he have no other than a boy's conception of the Bible, the book has a slight hold upon his respect. Unless he be held by a vital religious life, he easily infers that such a book as he thinks the Bible to be, is unworthy of the confidence of a rational mind. Ignorance of the Bible is one occasion of doubt. Large, intelligent study of it is an effective remedy for doubt. Many things, by themselves perplexing, are made clear and forceful when seen in their historic connection. One who sees the book in its parts and in its unity, who gets a proper idea of the growth and relations of it, is compelled to accord to it profound respect and confidence."

FACTS are stubborn things, and at their first appearance not always welcome. It is not an unusual event for them to disturb some favorite theory; and the theory thus disturbed seems to suffer a sort of injustice which quickens sympathy and strengthens attachment. In all spheres of human activity theories have frequently suffered from an attack of facts. But in spite of all noisy fluttering on the part of theories and of loud protestation on the part of their champions, facts have had a cool way of persisting. Still it is of *facts* only that this may be said. Many inferences not yet beyond challenge pose as facts, and it takes a keen eye to detect in these inferences the absence of an established right and title to the rank of facts. Is it not true that some (perhaps many) of the brilliant deliverances of scholars are not

* *New Englander and Yale Review*, November, 1887, pp. 360-372. New Haven: William L. Kingsley.

yet entitled to all the importance which is now claimed for them? They may be facts, and facts which will destroy some cherished preconceptions concerning Bible questions. Chronologies, theologies, eschatologies *may* have to be recast. Assyriology, for example, abounds with brilliant hints at new interpretations of Scripture. But is it yet time to accept these brilliant hints as established facts? When they really establish their claim, then we may be sure that they are with us to stay. But whatever changes they may bring to pass, they cannot disturb the great basal truths. "The foundation of God standeth sure."

EVERY reading man will admit that a biblical allusion will give point to an argument or round out a period as will no other classic allusion. Macaulay's *Essays* are examples of the great indebtedness of forcible and elegant English to the Bible for its most finished point-ness. Note a few instances taken at random from these writings:

"Surely there is no sword like that which is beaten out of a ploughshare."

"The times of refreshing came to all neighboring countries. One people alone remained, like the fleece of the Hebrew warrior, dry in the midst of that benignant and fertilizing dew. While other nations were putting away childish things, the Spaniard still thought as a child, and understood as a child."

"The literature of France had been to ours what Aaron was to Moses, the expositor of great truths which would else have perished for want of a voice to utter them with distinctness."

"You never saw his opinions [those of Sir James Mackintosh] in the making, still rude, and requiring to be fashioned by thought and discussion. They came forth like the pillars of that temple in which no sound of axes or hammers was heard, finished, rounded, and exactly suited to their places."

"With every right to the head of the board, [Mirabeau] took the lowest room, and well deserved to be greeted with—Friend, go up higher."

These are but a few extracts. The number might be greatly enlarged. In reading classic English such passages might profitably be marked. An exercise of this kind would be sure to show that the most telling literary effects—to say nothing of others—are produced by a ready use of what is in the Bible.

ONE of the necessary things, in these days is the purchase of books. Some students of the Bible, among them many ministers, are disposed to regard book-buying as something superfluous. If they have *Scott* or *Henry*, and a copy of the abridged edition of Smith's Bible Dictionary, nothing more is needed. There are some

who are so unfortunately situated as not to be able to purchase books, though keenly appreciating the lack of them. There are others who, though all the time buying, never have a well-selected library. Do men in buying books realize that, in case the book purchased proves worthless, they have thrown away not only the money thus expended, but also the time given to the perusal of the book? that instead of being advanced and helped, they have been put back and injured? There is no part of a student's work in which greater care should be shown than in this matter of selecting books. One's whole work, his method of thought, will be to a greater or less degree determined by the books which he studies. In what is said here, particular reference is made to the study of the Bible. A single glance at a minister's library will inform us pretty accurately as to the kind of food which he furnishes his hearers. Do we see C. H. M., Jukes, "Treasury of David," etc., etc.? The case is a clear one. Do we see Delitzsch, Perowne, Cambridge Bible for Schools and Colleges, "Current Discussions," Bissell on the "Pentateuch," Briggs on "Messianic Prophecy," etc., etc.? The case is equally clear. But note carefully: we do not suppose for a moment that in the latter case the minister preaches to his audience Delitzsch or Perowne, the theories of the Pentateuchal problems, or the debated questions which relate to prophecy. This is exactly what he does *not* do. The presence of these books upon his shelves, supposing that he has read them, indicates his method of work, his style of thought. They indicate that his preaching is fresh and suggestive; that he may pass the dead-line of fifty without fear. The truth is, a man's library is, generally, an index of his intellectual life. There are notable exceptions; but in most cases the rule holds good.

It is not so much a question of *how many*, but rather of *what kind*. There are few who can buy one out of ten books which they desire. The fewer it is possible to purchase, the greater should be the care in deciding what these shall be. It is a moment of serious importance, when a young man proceeds to form the nucleus of a future library. His means are limited; books are numerous. Here are six or more commentaries on each book of the Bible; one is all that he can afford. Here are three or four "Introductions," "Histories;" which shall he take? Then he must have some general works on "Philology," on "Criticism," on "Travels." Hundreds of miscellaneous works bearing on this or that feature of the Bible are before his eyes. What shall he do? There is still another factor in the case.

The same book may be excellent for one man, and worthless for another. The decision must be made in view of the man's abilities, temperament and proclivities. Is it then an easy question to mark out a list of works which should be purchased? In his "Letter to a pastor who wishes to invest \$200 in books pertaining to Old Testament Study," Prof. Weidner has undertaken a work the difficulty of which would deter many. It is not to be supposed that any other Old Testament specialist will think that this list is in all respects the best possible. From a somewhat different point of view as to the kind of Bible-study which men ought to carry on, Prof. John P. Peters, of Philadelphia, will furnish a similar list for the January STUDENT. Opinions of other Old Testament specialists will also be presented. Is there any more practical question relating to Old Testament work than that which relates to the books which one ought to purchase?